

# NELS MICHELSON HOUSE

## DETROIT

Direct Impact: \$489,000  
Indirect Impact: \$552,570  
Total Economic Impact: \$1,041,570



Detroit lumberman and building contractor Nels Michelson personally built his Italian Renaissance house and carriage house in 1917. L. A. Young, a supplier to the automotive industry, acquired the house, constructing the Athletic Building, with its Olympic-sized swimming pool and two-lane bowling alley, in 1926. From 1967 to 1969, Motown Record mogul Berry Gordy Jr. lived in the house. He moved to California in 1969, and the house sat vacant until Cynthia Reaves purchased it in 2001. Ms. Reaves restored the house over a period of seven years. The project represents 100 percent private investment – of funds and sweat equity. Ms. Reaves only hired people to do the things she could not teach herself or other family members to do. The project involved both exterior and interior work in all three buildings including, but not limited to, restoration of the front porch and slate walkway, repair and replacement of the original copper gutters and downspouts, exterior paint and trim repair, plumbing, lock restoration, mechanical heating and cooling systems, interior painting and decorative plaster restoration, and tile restoration. This meticulously completed project resulted in the renewal of a prominent house in the Boston-Edison National Register Historic District, and it demonstrates what the State Historic Preservation Tax Credits mean to homeowners who restore or rehabilitate a historic residence.

Location: 918 West Boston Boulevard  
Project Contact: Cynthia Reaves  
Original Use: Single Family Residential  
Current Use: Single Family Residential  
SHPO Contact: Bryan Lijewski / 517.373.1631



517.373.1630 - STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE - [www.michigan.gov/shpo](http://www.michigan.gov/shpo)

SHPO HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDITS